

SW Area FALL 08 NEWSLETTER

SW Area Weed District

Coordinators

Anaconda/Deer Lodge
County

Sharon Scognamiglio 563-4055

Beaverhead County

Jack Eddie 683-3790

Broadwater County

Pam Converse 266-9243

Butte/Silver Bow County

John Moody 497-6460

Gallatin County

Dennis Hengle 582-3265

Jefferson County

Sam Little 425-4211

Madison County

Margie Edsall 843-5594

Powell County

Open 490-5409

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY BY: JACK EDDIE

I'm one of many counties I'm sure that can only say thank God it's over. This season has been one of the most stressful seasons that I have ever been through. From the first week in June having three 4-wheeler accidents—one which rolled into the Big Hole River and floated down stream 5.5 miles before some fisherman got it to the bank. I guess I should say what was left of it, which I might say was not much. During all of this we continued to

treat weeds, as they appeared but with the cool spring it took Knapweed a long time but Houndstongue loved it. We saw our first knapweed flower in the 3rd week in July, which was 2 weeks longer then

usual.

Our program took many hits with 3 more 4-wheeler accidents, on which life-flight came & picked one person up. I might add that he had only been employed with us for 5 day's before the accident. I must also tell everyone about the other accidents or incidents that we have had so that maybe it won't happen to other programs. We hired interns for a project in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy & US Fish, Wildlife, Service. On a cool day the one intern had decided to be the driver of the truck owned by US Fish & Wildlife Service while the others sprayed weeds.

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ATV that tumbled down the Big Hole river 5.5 miles before some fisherman were able to bring it ashore. No chemical was spilled

MADISON MUSINGS BY: MARGIE EDSALL

Wow what a season! Seems like everything in the beginning of the season was working against us. Weather, accidents, equipment loss, just to name a few. In one day we lost one truck, one trailer, and disabled three 4-wheelers. We also had one crew member on the disabled list for 3 weeks.

But no need to despair, after replacements, repairs, and rehabilitation the County was able to meet most of it's obligations. We treated over 562 acres of Department of Transportation Right of Ways and gravel pits. Managed many of the FWP fishing accesses scattered throughout Madison

County. County crews treated close to 300 acres of Right of Ways and Range for BLM, and treated over 250 acres along County roads, and County managed properties. We sent a number of notices to landowners concerning noxious weed

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MONTANA WEED CONTROL ASSOCIATION HAPPENINGS

BY DIRECTOR BECKY KINGTON

Greetings Southwest Area Council members from the Montana Weed Control Association. Most of you have likely read our latest fall newsletter but I'll review a couple of things we have going on. As always, this time of year, we are gearing up for the annual conference— it is a very exciting agenda with opportunities for everyone. I encourage every member who can to attend the Montana Weed Summit slated for the final day of the conference. We will be looking at our strengths and weaknesses to help us remain the leaders in noxious weed management in the nation. It will be a great and interactive session. Please log onto www.mtweed.org to find the agenda and registration forms. Online registration can also be made there. I am looking forward to be able to introduce Diana Ericson, our new staff member, to you there. She truly is

doing a fantastic job as our Member Services Technician and we are keeping her a whole lot busier than I think she bargained for. Hopefully if our membership grows, we can get her on full time. The MSU Weed ID books have flown off the shelves this summer and fall. I am still sitting on quite a stockpile of them. Please remember we are able to offer them at \$1.50 each through a grant we have. If you would like one, please contact me at 406-684-5590 or becky.kington@mtweed.org and I can send you one with an invoice. The total price is \$3.00 for a single book and shipping and handling. They are also offered online for those of you who wish to order them in larger quantities. We have a fall board meeting in November (18 & 19) in Billings with a whole bunch of topics to get covered in 2 days. Changes are coming in membership levels and prices, benefits to members and committee projects. We are always looking for enthusiastic and forward-thinking board and committee projects. The SW Area Council will be holding a weed board and commissioner training on February 4 & 5 in Butte. This training is provided by the

MWCA and the Dept. of Ag through a Trust Fund grant. Details and invitations will be forthcoming soon. Otherwise, the Association is putting in for two Trust Fund grants this year, a 2010 calendar and continued funding for the Zero Spread Campaign. The MWCA has also contracted with the Sponsorship Network to help us secure corporate funders to offset costs of the annual conference, grow membership and continue the Zero Spread Campaign. Lots of irons in the fire. It always works out that way when the coordinators and weed managers slow down, life here in the MWCA offices speed up! Oh and one final challenge to leave with you. The MWCA will be embarking on a first ever membership drive in 2009. Our goal is to increase our membership from 700 to 1,000 by year end. If every member finds one more person to join, we will easily reach that goal. Please help us grow our membership to better serve you and to promote our cause. Noxious weeds are Montana's number one environmental threat! Have a great holiday season and we look forward to seeing you in Billings in January.

Constitution of Montana

Preamble : We the people of Montana grateful to God for the quiet beauty of our state, the grandeur of our mountains, the vastness of our rolling plains, and desiring to improve the quality of life, equality of opportunity and to secure the blessings of liberty for this and future generations do ordain and establish this constitution.



BEAVERHEAD

CONT'D

All this time not knowing that a silent killer was attacking (carbon monoxide) from an exhaust leak. Through out all of this the bright spot is that everyone will survive and it doesn't take the barber as much time to cut my hair.

Beaverhead County continues to change. I think we may be seeing the beginning of the migration & with this things are going to change, some for the good & some for the bad. I have had 2 of the 3 helicopter projects for this fall cancelled due to an environmental group called Western Watershed. I hope we can get a ruling by spring so we can accomplish what we had planned.

On the bright side most everyone seems to want to do something about the weed problem, our slide-in program continues to grow along with the cost-share program. The Dyers Woad plants found in Beaverhead County was down once again this year and we can only hope that this

continues. The Weed Department feels that Beaverhead County is Salt Cedar free after removing 5 trees, one of which was at the Clark Canyon Reservoir most likely brought in on a recreation vehicle. Now we have just discovered Japanese Knotweed in some ornamental plantings. With this discovery the 2009 season should be busy. The program as a whole continues to grow with responsibilities and employees. Each year we wonder how we are going to pull it off but with all of the problems we seem to be able to get through another season with many successes. All 27 spray-days for the most part were well attended & everyone wants to do it again next year. We will be developing the 2009 list soon. I would like to thank the 3 commissioners for their great support, without it the program would not be as successful.

MC MUSING

CONT'D

Infestations & in the end carried out one non-compliance. Not bad considering the amount of notices that were sent out.

The County did an incredible amount of cost share this season & helped distribute grant funding for additional projects. Because of the late start that everyone experienced the cost share applications continue to come in. A rough estimate to what has been reimbursed to landowners is approximately \$74,000.00. This is nothing short of incredible. When you think of the amount of noxious weed management that is taking place on the ground well, you all deserve a pat on the back.

Updates on special projects in Madison County are: *Sheep pilot* project completed it's 5th year, *Madison River Corridor* work was completed for it's 4th year. The contractor was only able to advance to below Varney Bridge this year. With funding cuts associated with the grant & the extensive amount of noxious weeds that everyone was victim too, progress was slow. The *Madison County Bio-control Program* made numerous releases throughout the County and identified a few more collection sites for future use. Overall, the season turned out to be a pretty good one. A lot was accomplished & with only a few minor setbacks. Here's hoping you have had a productive season, & look for us in the spring.

Beaverhead County Weed Days 2009

May 26-28	Crew Training
June 4	Gallagher
June 9	Wise River
June 10	Burma Road
June 11	Lima Dam
June 13	Wise River
June 16	Maiden Rock
June 17	BOR
June 18	Snowline
June 19	Wise River Cemetery
June 10	Blacktail Ridge Road Argenta
June 24	Montana/Idaho
June 25	Big Sheep
June 27	Ruby Dam
June 30	Lima
July 2	Wisdom
July 9	Beaverhead/Ravalli
July 11	Beaverhead County Weed Day
July 14	Trapper Creek
July 18	Wise River Pull
July 22	Medicine Lodge
July 23	Jones Creek
July 24	Monida Hill
July 25	Grasshopper
August 1	Argenta
August 8	BOR
August 19	Wisdom
September 3	Wise River



In one day Madison County's BLM Crew lost one truck, one trailer, and disabled three 4-wheelers.

GALLATIN COUNTY

BY JOHN ANSLEY

Well another field season has come and gone. I have been in my position as Enforcement/Education Coordinator since May 2007. The summer of 2008 for me consisted of dealing with new complaints as well as follow up on many complaints from last year, meeting with property owners, spraying, grant work for the Frog Rock WMA, educational events, & running the sprayer rental program. We had approximately 140 complaints during the 2008 summer season. Each complaint was addressed & the property owner was notified. These are the steps taken when dealing with complaints: I find out from the complainant the



Location of the complaint and then verify if the complaint is valid. I then use GIS & County Tax Records to find the current property owner. Once I have the owner, I send the owner a 1st letter which is either a Property Inspection Notice or a

“Survey Letter” depending on the severity of the infestation.

This 1st letter contains a packet of information & control tips on the noxious weeds located on their property, photos of the infestation, a GIS map of their property & Google Earth map with the location of the infestation, & a list of current commercial applicators. The property owner then has 10 days from receipt of the letter to respond to our office. If the Property owner does not contact our office, then a 2nd letter, (Voluntary Compliance) is mailed with 10 days to respond. If no contact is made on the 2nd letter, then a 3rd & final letter (Notice of Non-Compliance) with 10 days to respond. If no contact or weed control occurs on the property,

then we can make arrangements to have the property treated. We did not conduct any on the ground enforcement actions for the 2008 season. Overall, most people that we have contacted have been pleasant & agreeable to implementing some form of noxious weed management. This winter, we will mail out thank you letters along with 2009 noxious weed calendars to those who did work on controlling noxious weeds.

In other news, the Gallatin County Weed District received 2 grants this year from the NWTF. One was called the

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JEFFERSON COUNTY

BY: SAM LITTLE

Jefferson County Weed District tries to keep track of numbers for overall contracts and participants in the cost share program this year, going from about 270 to about 235. More than 1200 contacts were made through the district this year from outreach programs, educational meetings, trade shows, and property visits. Community involvement among homeowners has been significant. Ten homeowners' associations approached the district for assistance through educational material, herbicide, and/or equipment rental. Our rental tanks were used by many people for weed control and working on the Pine beetle problem. One neighbor would see another neighbor working in weeds and the ball would start rolling. The equipment would make its way down the road a lot at a time.

We all know the pine beetles are having our forest for lunch and a big supper. Land owners are looking for help, even though it may

be too little & too late. Many weed coordinators know that after about every number on the county telephone list has been called, the weed department is the last resort for people wanting help. As a result, we backed into the pine beetle arena. Somehow the word got out. Now, we get calls from all over SW Montana.

As one caller said, “I don’t need another booklet, I want help. What can I do?”

In the process, we are working with state agencies, FS & BLM to formulate ideas & approaches that would give some assistance to land owners. This is the same way it went with grasshoppers. Being the last number on the list, we started getting inquiries & went into the hopper business backside first. When there were a few hoppers crawling up pant legs, sitting on dash boards & eating hay fields & gardens the calls started. I don’t think grasshop-

pers were as bad this year but people remembered there was a place they could find assistance. A few gardens were saved.

This coming winter we are planning re-certification training geared toward the owners of lots & small acreages. More intensive classes are planned for Boulder & Whitehall. In early spring a basic 6 hr. class is planned for new licenses.

Other projects in the community involved mapping weeds along the Jefferson Canal for inventory purposes, & also in hope of proposing a collaborative weed control effort of landowners along the canal. Another project in the works will involve treating about 600 acres in the Boulder Valley next spring or fall on private ground.



Another season of field work is coming to an end for the Big Hole Watershed Weed Committee (BHWWC). So, just as we have every year, we celebrated our accomplishments with the annual Weed Whackers Ball. The residents in the Big Hole watershed have really embraced this annual event & they, along with the BHWWC, continue to make it a huge success.

For those of you who don't know, the BHWWC is made up of landowners from Jackson all the way to Twin Bridges. Their devotion is the driving force behind this whole movement, so I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize them: Becky Kington, Twin Bridges; Dean & Eddie Lou Stanchfield, Wise River; Erik Kalsta, Glen; Mark Kambich, Divide; Mark Wilcox, Wise River; Rod Royer, Jackson; & (my wonderful husband) Tom Caddy, Divide. Not to be forgotten is a group of weed folks from counties & agencies also focused on weed management in the watershed: Margie Edsall, Jack Eddie, John Moodry, Mike Mooney, Lacey Decker, Emma Rens & everybody's favorite county commissioner, Garth Haugland.

On another note, I've always understood how important it is to get the word out on weeds. Landowners can't manage weeds if they can't identify them. Well, I have to tell you this hit me right between the eyes this year. I organized a spray day for a newly developed weed management area & we were

B H W W C

standing around talking about our plan of attack, & eating donuts, before everyone set out.

As we were visiting, one of the landowners said, "I don't have all these weeds you are talking about. I only have knapweed." I nearly choked because of course my mouth was filled with a jelly donut. This guy is one of my neighbors so I knew he had more than knapweed on his property.

Anyway, as it turned out, I thought we made some great headway in the fight against weeds & I felt good about forming new relationships with folks who showed up to talk about (and even spray) weeds. However, I was still concerned about Mr.

Neighbor of Mine who said he only had knapweed on his property & so when I went to bed that night it was still on my mind. Of course I woke up around 2:00 a.m. still upset about Mr. Neighbor of Mine, & that's when it hit me. Mr. Neighbor of Mine thought he only had knapweed because that was the only noxious weed he could identify! DUH!

I'm sure you see where I am going with this. I finally learned that the *second* most important thing I can do as a weed whacker is to help people like Mr. Neighbor of Mine learn to identify noxious weeds. (The *first* most important thing I do as a Weed Whacker is to bring donuts to spray day!)

Jeanne Caddy,
BHWWC, Coordinator
267-3354



How to maintain A Healthy Level Of Insanity

1. At Lunch Time, Sit In Your Parked Car With Sunglasses on and point a Hair Dryer At Passing Cars. See If They Slow Down.

2. Page Yourself Over The Intercom. Don't Disguise Your Voice!

3. Every Time Someone Asks You To Do Something, ask If They Want Fries with that.

4. Put Decaf In The Coffee Maker For 3 Weeks. Once Everyone has Gotten Over Their Caffeine Addictions, Switch to Espresso.

5. In the Memo Field Of All Your Checks, Write ' For Marijuana'

6. Skip down the hall Rather Than Walk and see how many looks you get.

7. Order a Diet Water whenever you go out to eat, with a serious face.

8. Specify That Your Drive-through Order Is 'To Go'.

9. Sing Along At The Opera.

10. Five Days In Advance, Tell Your Friends You Can't Attend Their Party Because You have a headache..

11. When The Money Comes Out The ATM, Scream 'I Won! I Won!'

12. When Leaving the Zoo, Start Running towards the Parking lot, Yelling 'Run For Your Lives! They're Loose!'

13. Tell Your Children Over Dinner, 'Due To The Economy, We Are Going To Have To Let One Of You Go.'

And The Final Way To Keep A Healthy Level Of Insanity

14. PICK UP A BOX OF CONDOMS AT THE PHARMACY, GO TO THE COUNTER AND ASK WHERE THE FITTING ROOM IS.

It's Called ... THERAPY !!!!!

NOTES FROM THE MVRG WEED COMMITTEE

The MVRG Weed Committee has wrapped up another exciting weed – fighting season! It was great to see so much progress made on the ground through our various projects & partnerships. In addition to our many projects, we were thrilled with the success of the 10th annual Noxious Weed Fundraiser held August 23, 2008 at the Sun Ranch, Roger Lang and the Sun Ranch hosted the 1st ever Noxious Weed Fundraiser 10 years ago, & it was great to return for the 10th Anniversary celebration! The dinner & auction were a huge success, enjoyed by nearly 400 guests. Funds raised will support Weed Committee activities for the coming year-promoting weed awareness & education, researching new weed control methods, & pursuing funding opportunities for weed control & cost share.

The committee was pleased to once again work with the Madison County Bio-Control Project, which rears, collects & re-distributes bio-control agents throughout the county. The bio-control project is run by Mellissa Newman, a science teacher at Ennis High School. Each year Mellissa hires 1-2

students to help monitor previous released & find new collection sites. This summer they were thrilled to find several sites where the insect populations had grown to collectable levels. Insects from these sites were re-distributed throughout the county. Bio-control is a great tool to be used as part of an integrated approach to weed control, & we are pleased to support this worthwhile program that directly benefits county residents.

The Missouri-Madison River Fund & PPL MT awarded the committee with a grant to address noxious weeds along the Madison River corridor. Partnering with the BLM & the River Fund, the committee helped facilitate weed treatment along several miles of the river corridor, 10 fishing access sites, & areas around Ennis Lake. Additionally, we published a brochure & poster highlighting noxious weed issues along the river, & hosted a public education day. This was an exciting project as the health of the river directly affects all of it's users, & noxious weeds threaten this critical ecosystem.

This was the first year the committee

worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to coordinate a multi-year, watershed level weed project near Harrison funded as part of their Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Participating landowners work together to address weeds on a landscape scale by contracting with NRCS to provide cost-share for weed control activities on their properties. This large-scale project got off to an outstanding start in 2008, treating more than 5000 acres of weeds. Multi-year projects like this provide the opportunity to make a significant impact on weed populations within the project area, & this project is off to an outstanding start!

Finally, perhaps one of our most exciting projects to date was also funded by NRCS, as part of a Conservation Innovation Grant. As part of this project livestock (cattle & bison) were "trained" to graze noxious weeds through a series of simple steps involving gradually introducing the animals to new foods over a period of several days. The implications of this type of project are potentially significant, & we are looking forward to performing some intensive monitoring in 2009 to

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GALLATIN CONT'D

Frog Rock WMA (Bozeman Pass Area) & the other was the Upper Madison WMA (West Yellowstone Area). Funds for the Upper Madison WMA were expended & we will be re-submitting the Upper Madison WMA for funding in 2009. The Frog Rock WMA still has funds available & we will use these in the 2009 field season. We are working on a new grant called the lower Madison WMA (Blacks

Headwaters State Park) & we will be submitting this grant to the NWTF for 2009. The Madison County Weed District/Madison Valley Ranchlands have the Middle Madison WMA & if we receive funding for the Upper Madison & Lower Madison WMA, then the entire Madison River Watershed from West Yellowstone to the Headwaters State Park will be in a WMA.

MVRG CONT'D

quantify the impact these animals are having on weed populations. We also hope to work with several new ranches to help turn their livestock into "Weed Warriors". NRCS was a valuable partner on this project as well, providing not only funding, but technical support, expertise & help in the hands on implementation as well.

Additionally, the committee once again helped coordinated the fourth year of a sheep pilot grazing project along 7 miles of the Madison River. Sheep grazing within the project area has helped drastically reduce Spotted knapweed, & by doing so has seen an increase in more desirable forage. We also worked with the County Weed Board to obtain funding through the MT Department of Agriculture's Noxious Weed Trust Fund to provide cost-share for private landowners in the area to target toadflax & other noxious weeds. We also worked with the USFS & taught a special noxious weed unit at their outdoor education event, Bear Creek Days. We worked with Kaye Suzuki of the WSFS to teach approximately 150 students about noxious weeds as well as provide each student with their own copy of "What's In Your World?", a new weed curriculum developed by the Statewide Noxious Weed Awareness & Education Campaign.

As you can tell, it has been an exciting year & the MVRG Weed Committee is thrilled with all the participation & interest in noxious weeds in the valley. By working together we can continue to make headway against this serious environmental threat. For more information about the MVRG Weed Committee or it's activities please contact (406) 682-3731.

Melissa Griffiths, MVRG

Let's Get'r
Done Folks!!!



MONTANA WEED CONTROL ASSOCIATION 52nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"Getting it Done in the Real World" Economic & Climate Change impacts

We are already planning for the MWCA Annual Conference, and we are excited once again to bring you a fresh and informative conference. This year's workshops include BLM ASAP procedures, developing a CWMA, and a second annual Montana commercial applicators workshop. The breakout stands will include presentations on "getting it done in the real world" (economics & solutions to stretch the dollar), successful relationships, mapping, research & new invaders (new state-listed noxious weed presentations), vendors & new technology, and "what we do for you" (a strand for all weed organizations in Montana to showcase what they are about). We are hoping to secure State Conservationist Dave White to address the Farm Bill and Celestine Duncan to address the economics of the newly revised Montana State Weed Plan. The theme for the annual awards banquet will be Git R Done - a Larry-the-Cable Guy sort of affair - so bring your best redneck attire! As always, there will be lots of networking and educational opportunities, another fun silent auction and a coordinator raffle. We hope to see you at this event as you continue to take an active role in noxious weed management and prevention.

See you in January,

2009 MWCA Annual Conference
Planning Committee

A Call for Presenters!

If you know of anyone who be a great presenter for any of the ideas listed above, please contact bkington@3rivers.net



JANUARY 13 - 15, 2009
Billings Crowne Plaza
(FORMERLY THE SHERATON)
1-800-465-4329
ROOM RESERVATIONS UNDER THE
MWCA block until filled



check out www.mtweed.org
for TENTATIVE AGENDA. Registration will
begin October 1, 2008